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[The Physical Therapy Aide: Collection of Guidelines and Policy Statement.]
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Materials in this collection include a policy statement for the training and utilization of the physical therapy aide, guidelines for training, and a sample form for reporting information about a training program to the American Physical Therapy Association. The policy statement defines the aide as an unlicensed worker who has completed on-the-job training and who functions under the supervision of a professional physical therapist to perform designated routine tasks and assist with other activities which are predetermined and assigned by the professional physical therapist. Qualifications, training standards, and duties are outlined. The guidelines for training stipulate the kinds of institutions in which didactic instruction may be given and include a 109-hour sample program outline as well as a sample schedule providing for 109 hours of didactic instruction and 211 hours of on-the-job training. The training report form requests such information as number of trainees, age range, education, work experience, wage during training, employment after training, use of guidelines, and problems encountered. (JK)

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AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION
1740 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10019

Training and Utilization of the Physical Therapy Aide.

Policy Statement.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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TITLE: Physical Therapy Aide

DEFINITION:

The physical therapy aide is a nonlicensed worker who has completed an on-the-job training program. The physical therapy aide's primary function is to perform designated routine tasks related to the operation of a physical therapy service but may assist with patient related activities which are predetermined for each patient and assigned by the professional physical therapist.

PREREQUISITES:

1. Age: 18 year minimum

2. Health Status: Good physical and emotional health as determined by a pre-employment medical examination.

3. Personal Qualifications: History of school and/or work performance which gives evidence of the ability to meet requirements of the job.

TRAINING:

A training program for the physical therapy aide may be established when there is a demonstrated need and reasonable assurance of employment.

1. There shall be active participation of professional physical therapists in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the physical therapy aide training program.

2. The training program shall be located within or affiliated with a physical therapy service which meets the criteria established by the American Physical Therapy Association.

3. The training program shall follow the guidelines recommended by the American Physical Therapy Association. An outline to be used for the training of aides is available from the American Physical Therapy Association.

4. Upon satisfactory completion of the recommended training program, the trainee is eligible to:

   a. use the title, Physical Therapy Aide.

   b. perform the functions which are outlined in this document under the supervision of a legally qualified physical therapist.

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SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP:

The physical therapy aide may function only with the continuing supervision of the professional physical therapist.

The physical therapy aide may work only in a supervised situation where there is direction, guidance and frequent observation by the professional physical therapist.

DUTIES:

The extent to which the physical therapy aide will participate in the following activities will be dependent upon the organization, structure, and size of the physical therapy service.

1. Operational Activities

   a. Maintenance:
      1. follow established procedures pertaining to the care of equipment and supplies.
      2. prepare, maintain, clean up treatment areas; maintain supportive areas.

   b. Transportation: transport patients, records, equipment, and supplies in accordance with established policies and procedures.

   c. Clerical: perform predetermined general office procedures.

   d. Other: perform special duties as assigned.

2. Patient Related Activities:

   The physical therapy aide shall not interpret physicians' referrals, perform evaluative procedures, initiate or adjust treatment, assume responsibility for planning patient care, nor make entries in the patients' records, but may:

   a. assist patients in preparation for and, as necessary, during, and at the conclusion of treatment.

   b. assemble and disassemble equipment and accessories.

   c. assist patients in the safe practice of activities related to the development of strength and endurance.

   d. perform treatment procedures predetermined for each patient by the legally qualified physical therapist and in accordance with the training of the worker.

RECOGNITION:

Recognition of the training of the aide shall be left to the discretion of the training institution.

If a certificate is awarded, it is recommended that the document include a statement to the effect that the aide has been trained to work under the supervision of a legally qualified physical therapist.

Policy statement prepared by the A.P.T.A. Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Utilization and Training of the Nonprofessional Assistants, March 1966 and approved by the House of Delegates, July 1966.

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Guidelines for Physical Therapy Aide Training.

Introduction

The attached guidelines for physical therapy aide training have been prepared for use by health care facilities with established physical therapy services which are concerned with the development or modification of physical therapy aide training programs.

This is essentially an on-the-job training program. The practice sessions, at least, must be held in an established physical therapy service. The didactic aspects may be provided in an institution which provides training in health careers and may be in one of the following categories:

Hospital accredited by the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation
Approved home health agency
Public vocational school
Rehabilitation center which is a member of the Association of Rehabilitation Centers

It is desirable that more than 1 physical therapist be employed in the physical therapy service which is selected for the practice sessions.

The professional physical therapist shall participate actively in the the development, implementation, and evaluation of the physical therapy aide training program. The participating physical therapist should have a minimum of 2 years of professional experience after completing professional education. Supervisory, administrative and/or teaching experience is desirable.

It is to be noted that the hours allotted in the guidelines for each topic indicate the relative importance of the subject and of the possible division of classroom instruction and supervised-on-the-job training. The classroom hours total approximately 1/3 of the total training time and may need to be adjusted in line with the learning abilities of the trainee. However, care should be taken to avoid a disproportionate number of classroom hours in relation to the practice sessions. The method of presentation-lecture, laboratory, demonstration, or a combination is not specified but is left to the discretion of the instructor.

It may be necessary to adjust the hours and some topics depending upon the type of facility and the characteristics of the patients generally treated in the institution where the aide will be employed. It is imperative that the physical therapy aide trainee have adequate opportunity to observe and practice in the setting where he will be employed.

Upon completion of the training program, the physical therapy aide may work only in a supervised situation where there is direction, guidance, and frequent observation by the professional physical therapist. The physical therapy aide's primary function is to perform designated routine tasks related to the operation of a physical therapy service but he may assist with patient-related activities which are predetermined for each patient and assigned by the professional physical therapist.

The attached materials identify the functions of a physical therapy aide and his relationship with other workers in a physical therapy service. Uniformity in the use of the title physical therapy aide and in the training of this worker will denote certain qualifications.

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Guidelines for Physical Therapy Aide Training

UNIT I. INTRODUCTION — HOURS

A. Orientation I — 8 hours

- Health field
- Health facility
- Physical therapy service
  - personnel
  - relationships
- Employment information
- Rules and regulations
- Job of the aide
  - duties
  - responsibilities
  - evaluation of performance

B. Orientation II — 4 hours

- Attitudes and standards of conduct
  - relationships with
    - patients
    - personnel
    - visitors
- Personal health and hygiene
- Posture and grooming
- Body mechanics

C. Orientation III — 3 hours

- Prevention of spread of disease and infection
  - handwashing
  - principles of sterile technique
  - principles of disinfection and sterilization
- Common hospital and medical terms
- Identification of common hospital equipment

D. Orientation IV — 4 hours

- Safety practices
  - Housekeeping
  - Fire
  - Accident reports

Protection of patient
records
personal property

First aid- simple bandaging

UNIT II. MAINTENANCE AND CLERICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Care of Treatment Areas — 4 hours

Common physical therapy terms
Identification of Equipment

Care of
wet areas
dry areas

Care of beds and plinths

B. Care and Maintenance of Supplies — 4 hours

Care
Distribution
Storage
Inventory

OF: Linen
Expendable supplies
Sterile supplies and medications
Office supplies

C. Care, Maintenance and Preparation of Equipment for Use — 12 hours

Cleaning and disinfection
Maintenance care
Safety checks
Storage
Preparation for use

OF: Hydrotherapy equipment
Electrotherapy equipment
Exercise, assistive and supportive equipment
Miscellaneous and special equipment

D. Office Procedures — 4 hours

Communications
telephone
messages
Reception
Schedules
Records
office
patient
Filing

UNIT III. TRANSPORT AND PREPARATION OF PATIENT FOR TREATMENT

A. Patient Transport — 4 hours

Transportation equipment
Care
safety in use
Assisting patient in transfer
assisting to sitting
assisting to standing

B. Body Positioning and Alignment — 9 hours

Changing bed position
Positioning and draping for treatment

C. Assistance in Dressing and Undressing

Care of patient's clothes
personal belongings
Removal and application of supportive and assistive devices

D. Special Considerations — 3 hours

Observation of patient's comfort and response
Surveillance

Equipment
traction
plaster casts
special frames and beds

UNIT IV. STRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE OF FUNCTION OF HUMAN BODY

A. Bones and joints — 3 hours
bony prominences
joint motions

B. Skin
care
pressure areas
decubiti

C. Muscles and nerves — 4 hours
nervous systems
major muscle groups
gross function
maintenance of function
lower extremities
upper extremities

D. Digestion — 4 hours
Gastro-Intestinal and Genito-Urinary systems
gross structures

Food
serving food
feeding the helpless patient
passing drinking water

Elimination
presentation and removal
bedpan
urinal

Special Orders
input and output
diet restrictions

Special equipment
tubes
recognition, function, care

E. Circulation and Respiration — 9 hours

Cardiovascular and respiratory systems
gross structure
normal function

Temperature, pulse and respiration

Special equipment
tubes
Circoelectric bed
other

Tilt Table

UNIT V. ASSIST THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST IN SELECTED TREATMENT PROCEDURES

A. Effects of heat and cold — 2 hours
Normal reactions
Danger signs to be observed and reported
Importance of observation and reporting

B. Applications of heat and cold — 6 hours
Purpose
Temperature control
application and removal

OF: Hot packs
Cold applications
Hubbard tank
Whirlpool
Pool without exercise
Contrast baths
Paraffin applications
Moist air
Infrared

C. Special Considerations — 4 hours
Geriatric patients
Pediatric patients
Special conditions
orthopedic
neurological
medical
surgical
psychiatric

UNIT VI. ASSIST THE PATIENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE

A. Assisting in practice of ambulation — 6 hours
- body mechanics
- safety precautions
- observations and reporting
- types of ambulation aids
  - uses
  - measurement and adjustment
  - care

B. Assisting in practice of transfer activities — 6 hours
- body mechanics
- safety precautions
- observations and reporting

C. Assisting in practice of self-care activities
- body mechanics
- adaptive devices
- precautions
- observations and reporting

D. Assisting in practice of general conditioning exercises — 6 hours
- purpose and types
- normal reactions
- precautions and danger signs
- observations and reporting
- care of equipment

Total hours- 109- not including reviews and tests
211- on-the-job training.

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Suggested Schedule for Physical Therapy Aide Training Program.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 Orientation I 8 hours	2 Orientation II 4 hours	3 Orientation III 3 hours	4 Orientation IV 4 hours	5 Care of Treatment areas 4 hours
6 Test Care and Maintenance of Supplies 4 hours	7 Care, Maintenance, and Preparation of Equipment for Use 4 hours	8 4 hours	9 4 hours	10 Office Procedures 4 hours
On The Job Training		On The Job Training		
11 Test Patient transport 4 hours	12 Body Positioning and Alignment; Draping Application of Clothing, Supportive, and 3 hours	13 3 hours	14 Removal and Assistive Devices 3 hours	15 Special Considerations Review 3 hours
On The Job Training		On The Job Training		
16 Test Bones, Joints, Skin Care 3 hours	17 Muscles and Nerves Maintenance of Function 4 hours	18 Digestion 4 hours	19 Review Circulation and Respiration Systems 2 hours	20 Temperature, Pulse, Respiration 3 hours
On The Job Training		On The Job Training		

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
21 Circulation & Respiration Special Equipment Tilt Table 4 hours	22 Review	23 Test Effects of Heat and Cold 2 hours	24 Applications of Heat and Cold 2 hours	25 2 hours
←	→	On The Job Training	→	→
26 Applications of Heat and Cold 2 hours	27 Special Considerations 2 hours	28 2 hours	29 Review Test	30 Assist in Practice of ambulation 2 hours
←	→	On The Job Training	→	→
31 Assist in Practice of Ambulation 2 hours	32 2 hours	33 2 hours	34 Assist in Practice of Transfer and Self-Care Activities 2 hours	35 2 hours
←	→	On The Job Training	→	→
36 Assist in Practice of General Conditioning Exercises 2 hours	37 2 hours	38 2 hours	39 Review	40 Final Test
←	→	On The Job Training	→	→

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Physical Therapy Aide Training Program
Report to the APTA

Name and address of health Care Facility:

Dates of Training program:
Name of supervising physical therapist:

Data regarding trainees:

1. Number in program:
   Male_____
   Female_____
2. Number completing program:
   Male_____
   Female_____
3. Range of age of those completing program:
   Number under 18 years_____
   Number 18-20_____
   Number 21-30_____
   Number 31-40_____
   Number 41-50_____
   Number 51-60_____
   Number over 61_____
4. Trainees' previous education and/or work experience:
   Number who did not complete high school_____
   Number who are high school graduates_____
   *Number who had other special education or training_____
   *Number who held previous employment_____
   Approximate length of time since previous employment:
   less than 6 months_____
   6 months to 1 year_____
   1 - 2 years_____
   more than 2 years_____
   (*If information is available about the nature of special education or training or previous employment please record on separate sheet.)
5. Were trainees paid an hourly wage during training program:
   Yes_____ amount_____
   No _____
   If yes, what was the source of funds:
   Training facility_____
   Government sponsored project_____
6. Are all trainees who completed the program presently employed as physical therapy aides:
   Yes_____ No_____
   Number employed in the training facility_____
7. If not, describe the nature of their present activities:
   (use separate sheet if necessary)

(over)

8. Describe your anticipated plans for follow up of trainees:

Data regarding Training program:

9. Were the APTA Guidelines used? Yes_____ No_____
10. Describe any modifications, additions or deletions which were made in the Guidelines:

11. Describe any problems which were encountered:

12. If available, please attach any course materials such as schedule of classes, bibliography, "handouts", tests.

Other

13. Describe any other problems which the trainees or the training facility encountered:

14. Any suggestions or recommendations:

Signed_____

Title_____

Date of report_____

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